

# FROCKS FOR THE SOUTHRING CHANGES ON WINTER STYLES

By ELEANOR HOYT BRAINERD.

THE day of revelations is past, so far as winter fashions are concerned. Already straw hats and spring materials are being shown for the benefit of the southward bound, and as for the designers and manufacturers, they are speaking of "last winter," as though the winter of 1915-16 were a mere matter of history.

But the women are wearing their winter clothes, and some uncommonly attractive winter clothes. They are even buying more winter clothes, lured thereto in some cases by after Christmas bargains and in other cases tempted by new variations of ideas which have become hackneyed in the original form of expression.

The Ritz-Carlton fashion show, coming late in the season, gave the dressmakers some charming themes with which to play, and the models shown for the Southern season show the influences of these ideas, as do some winter models brought out by way of postscripts to the main supply; but, as usual, the hats and frocks and coats prepared to meet the needs of women going South show no actual departures from winter modes and are, in fact, but those same models transplanted into materials suitable for sunshine and mild weather.

With no chance of a gay Southern season in Europe, the French dressmakers will not have their usual opportunity to try out experimental modes for the coming spring. Egypt and the Riviera offer no setting for fashion shows, even if women had the heart for preening their fine feathers in either place, and even Biarritz and Tangier, while out of the main path of the storm, will miss most of their habitués. So once more Americans are the chief customers, and it is not likely that anything really new will be tried out for them before the regular spring openings.

Many of the midwinter clothes are appropriate for wear in milder climates, thanks to the present day fashion of winter wearing of chiffon and taffeta and other materials once dedicated to summer use. To be sure, most of the winter frocks and suits are fur trimmed, but a touch of fur is permissible nowadays, even on summer frocks, and it is the modish coat that is lavishly fur trimmed, many of the frocks showing but a very little fur or none at all.

Substitute a little shoulder cape for your heavy coat, and there you are, equipped for warmer climates.

It is easy to find the shoulder cape or to have one made after a good design. The French dressers have played with the cape idea very effectively and one may have a cape in almost any length from that of Callot's cape collar, which lies flat over the shoulders and curves up high and close about the throat, buttoning down the left side from ear to shoulder point, to Worth's gorgeous velvet and sable full length cape, passing Jenny's little elbow depth coat capes en route.

Even mere collars, not frankly half cape, half collar, like the Callot model, often have a tendency capeward. A chic little frock of gabardine and taffeta illustrated in our large cut has a collar so ample that it almost belongs to the cape class. The collar lines suggest the Puritan collar which came upon us with such a rush last summer, but it falls from a very high standing collar instead of lying smoothly over the shoulders, and between the fronts appears this high collar band of fur. The collar itself is of gabardine, the bodice of taffeta, and the simple full skirt of taffeta trimmed in horizontal, rather wide bands of gabardine up to the hip line. Deep cuffs too are of the gabardine.

A very engaging little model of the simple sort that Parisiennes are wearing now is a good frock for a make-over, and nevertheless unquestionably smart. With the fur eliminated the collar would be less extreme and a swathed silk cravat would be a satisfactory substitute; and, indeed, we have seen a copy of this frock, partly finished in white serge and white taffeta, with a cravat of brilliant figured silk in futuristic orange and blue and purple, which, while demanding considerable of a wearer's complexion, was a very jolly, youthful looking affair.

Jaunty cape coat model, not for every woman, but attractive for the right woman, has a very short coat rippling out widely around the hips and pinched in snugly at the waist line, though the pinching in is done by cutting and draping of the soft material rather than by stiff tailoring. To add to the quaintness a cape falls just to the elbow around sides and back, leaving the sharp waist curve in view. This cape has a row of buttons and buttonholes straight up the middle of its back and the coat fronts turn back over it in a tailored collar with notched revers.

Naturally this coat, poorly made or badly worn, would play havoc with the figure, giving it indescribable bulkiness of line; but on a slim young mannequin it was as charming as it was quaint. Jenny has a short cape that falls from a high wrinkled fur bordered choker collar, to girdle top in front, but dips down below the hips in the back. Doucet's lovely white and silver evening model has a little cape of silver lace. Paquin's stunning blue velvet coat has a short cape bordered in gray fur across the back.

So it goes in frocks and coats, and there are the separate capes, those adorable little shoulder capes with muff and perhaps toque en suite. Some of these are all fur, like the short, clinging Russian sable cape of Cherulit's castor cloth costume cape.

One of the New York milliners is showing an altogether charming shoulder cape of chinchilla, lined with warm rose, held by big ornaments of dull silver and accompanied by a muff to match.

Another shop there is a short cape of ermine trimmed in black fox, with toque and muff to complete the set; and cleverly designed cape collars of seal and of beaver are numerous. Unusual furs and combinations of furs are frequently used for these cape sets and, though faddish, of course, are less extravagant than coats that exploit a passing fad, because they do not call for such quantities of fur.

## Modes of the Season Adapt Themselves Wonderfully Well to Wear in Warmer Climates

The fur set of our central group is not the thing for a conservative, who, when she buys furs, expects to wear them without change for at least several seasons; but then no short cape set fulfills that requirement, and the woman who can indulge her whims will find the odd shapes of the cape and muff under discussion attractive and will like the soft tone of the natural seal, with its contrasting trimmings of black fox.

When a fur cape or cape set is not wanted there are sets of velvet and fur or of cloth and fur; and, except in occasional instances, these are usually more practical and graceful than the all-fur models. Cherulit had the courage—born of unquestioned authority as well as of art—to make her Russian sable short cape clinging in lines, for a very flaring or rippling short cape, of any save the thinnest and supplest of pelts, is bound to have a certain clumsiness.

The cloth or velvet cape, on the other hand, can perform the feat of rippling and clinging at the same time and, with trimmings of good fur, can be made quite as elegant as the all-fur model. These sets are usually made en suite with suit or frock, but separate sets in adaptable colorings—chiefly black or African brown velvet and fur—are to be found.

Since the latest of our fashion shows the lovers of wide waists and straight lines from shoulder to hip have taken courage. There was so much newspaper and fashion magazine talk in the autumn, as in the spring, about the pinched in waist that the average woman felt she must make at least some concession to the movement. And, if the result of the concession was becoming, she has been wise enough, for the proportion of waist curves is larger than it has been in many a season.

The prevailing silhouette, leaving the full coat flowing from the narrow shoulders out of the question, does indicate the waist more or less emphatically; but, even at the beginning of the season, as this story then pointed out, the dress was authoritative sanction of the straightest clinging lines, and now, with Poiré the audacious stopping in his soldierly tracks to supply at least one collection of frocks and coats in his well known genre, and various other great dressmakers smiling indulgently on jerkin and loosely girdled one piece frocks, a woman not constructed along Mimi Pinson lines need not do violence to feelings, figure or fashion. The modish frock must needs be a trifle more shapely than it was, but boned seams and small waists are still the exception rather than the rule, even if one

all around the bottom, but the evening frock has what the negro revivalist calls "liberty." One never knows where its hem is going to shoot upward—nor how far upward it will shoot. In extreme cases an underskirt may afford first aid, but many an evening frock quite recklessly exposes not only ankles but more—far more. Not for the woman of really good taste, perhaps, this ultra flaring skirt, but of the mode none the less.

By way of atoning for abbreviation, in front or at sides, or all around, the evening frock may have a wisp of train draped over it and trailing on the floor, and this train has almost as many vagaries as the fashionable skirt hem. It may appear at the side or in the back, may be bustle draped or fall in soft jabotting folds, may be pointed, square, swallowtail, fishtail, or serpentine; it may be of floating, cloudy tulle or of velvet. A recent much exploited model has a train falling in rounded points at each side of the skirt, while between these trains, in the back the underskirt runs up to a perilous height, and the front is not so very much better.

One does not, of course, have to wear this sort of thing; but some of the ultra frocks are beautiful in their own way, and every French house has sponsored a short evening frock with a small train, though not all have gone to such extremes as have Callot Sours in the white and silver trimmed frock so lovely in other ways and so fearfully short in front and on the sides, where it runs up almost to knee height.

Even the wedding gowns at recent fashionable weddings have been shorter than ever before, save in the matter of train. A certain piquancy often results from the union of short, full, distended skirt and train, but when a clinging long line frock does appear among things modish, as it does at times, one realizes, with a sigh, that the average woman looked better in her evening gowns five years ago than she does now. As for the unlucky women below average—well, the less said about the scenic effect when they don the type of evening frock most common to-day the better.

Short jackets, straight or, at least, lower in line than the bodices of which they are integral parts, offer opportunities for adopting the trimly girdled bodice front, yet retaining the straighter lines in sides and back that pleasantly conceal a waist and hips not desirably slim. There are many ways of handling this jacket idea, the transparent or semi-transparent little coat being used with silk or velvet frock in some cases, while

in others the coat of silk or velvet is worn over thinner stuffs. A lovely little coat of blue satin embroidered all over in dull gold and edged narrowly with beaver was a feature of a frock whose full skirt of soft blue satin opened in front over an underskirt of blue chiffon.

### HOMEMADE FRENCH PASTRY.

DECORATIVE bits of French pastry are so popular that many an inexperienced housewife is trying her hand at making tarts, turnovers and individual pies, using a rich crust instead of the puff paste of the professional cook. After a careful inspection of a tray of these dainties as they appear at the tea hour at the hotels and restaurants, there is no reason why any woman who can make pie crust need hesitate to do a little experimenting.

Individual fruit tarts are the easiest form of French pastry for the unskilled cook to attempt. Choose detached pastry tins of the size wanted. Instead of lining them with the pastry, invert each little tin and cover it with a circle of crust. It will be found that the pastry does not shrink from the rim in baking as when the patty tin is lined with pie crust in the old fashioned way. It should be well pricked with the tines of a fork to insure the shell's keeping its shape while baking.

Variety in crust may be given by using equal quantities of entire wheat and pastry flour or by mixing into the ordinary crust finely chopped nut meats or powdered macaroon crumbs. Little baskets can be fashioned from these pastry shells by laying curves of crust which have been baked over some curved surface of suitable size. Empty baking powder tins of the quarter pound size are excellent for this purpose and six strips of pastry may be arranged over one can. These, when baked, can be inserted into the fruit filling of the tarts, pressing them in sufficiently to hold in place.

A favorite filling for these tarts is Malaga grapes, cooked for a few minutes in a wine flavored syrup. The grapes must not lose their shape and should be arranged in a little pyramid above the rim of the tart. As many as ten grapes should be allowed to an ordinary pastry shell. After the grapes are removed from the syrup it is boiled down until thickened and is then poured over the grapes as they are arranged in the tart.

Thinly sliced pear cooked with preserved ginger makes a delicious tart filling and the ever popular lemon meringue pie is again welcomed in this miniature form. Diced pineapple, segments of orange and stewed fruits of all kinds are appropriate for tart fillings.

Where thick marmalade is to be used in connection with the pastry an easy way is to cut the crust in oblongs about 5 by 1½ inches. Roll over



A cape and muff of natural seal and black fox and a frock of dark green taffeta and gabardine.

citron and other good things has come into popularity again and is used as filling for turnovers and between pastry strips. For the latter place a thin layer of pie crust on a baking tin, spread with Banbury mixture and cover with another thin layer of pie

crust. With a pastry jagger mark off in strips four inches by one and a half and bake in a quick oven. Cover with a thin layer of confectioner's sugar and water and sprinkle on spread with Banbury mixture and cover with another thin layer of pie

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## CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE CITY OF MEXICO

By DR. LUIS GUARDA.

MIDWINTER with us is not the season of snow and ice to be found in the North. Our Christmas festival is warm with the perfume of flowers, rich in its luscious fruits, for we celebrate the sacred anniversary in the golden sunshine of our southern climate. While you in the North are gathered around big open fireplaces, waiting for the sound of sleigh bells on the reindeer team driven by your wonderful Santa Claus, we are celebrating the religious significance of this sacred memory out of doors.

The origin of these posada parties at Christmas time comes originally from ancient Spanish custom, for nowhere except in Mexico and a few other places in South America is the posada known except on the southern coast of Ireland, where the survivors of the Spanish Armada went ashore there. In our country we reserve the social privacy of the Christmas festival even more jealously than you do in other countries. If you are not a Mexican or at any rate a Latin it is difficult to obtain entrance to a posada. It is well that we should make the occasion exclusive, for Christmas commemorates the foundation of domestic life, it symbolizes the integral unity of the home circle.

Just outside the beautiful city of Mexico is the Holy Hill, so designated because it belongs to the patron saint of the Mexican Indians and people, the Virgin of Guadalupe. Although Mexico is fortunate in many holidays, none is more universally observed than Christmas. As early as December 12 these people flock into the city of Mexico from the villages and mountains to pay their respects to their patron saint on the Holy Hill, and afterward they begin to build their little posadas or booths, where during the weeks actually preceding Christmas Day one can purchase the city fiesta things suitable for the holiday.

The atmosphere of gaiety and good will which one sees on the streets of Paris, or London, or New York preceding Christmas appears much earlier in the city of Mexico. The brilliant bunting decorations of the posadas, their display of varicolored wares, the usual toy instruments, the jostling of crowds and laughter of children in the streets last almost the entire month of December.

It is on the night of December 17 that the Mexicans who are rich

enough to give Christmas parties begin their festivities. The reason the Christmas anniversary yearly begins on the 17th is based upon the old legend that Joseph and Mary upon going to pay tribute to the Czar spent nine nights in a journey to Bethlehem. Every night they were obliged to beg shelter, and every night they were turned away. This is why the Mexican Posada begins on December 17, just nine days from the birth of our Lord, in commemoration of this long journey of Joseph and Mary. Almost every Mexican family observes this novena of nine nights, inviting their best friends and their relatives to share the ceremonies with them.

As the guests arrive, each is given a lighted candle. All the members of the family, including the servants, are similarly provided. When all have arrived they form, two by two, in a procession, for the purpose of a pilgrim parade. These at the head of the procession carry exquisite little statues of the Holy Family, Joseph on foot, leading the donkey on which Mary is seated. These figures are skillfully made by the Mexican Indians, usually designed out of rough clay. So the procession starts on what is known as its pascor around the entire house. At various points along the route singers have been placed ready to chant their denial of shelter to the pilgrims. Mexican houses are nearly all built alike, with a central courtyard, the columns of which support an upper floor, around which all the rooms are built. The posada procession moves solemnly and slowly over the entire house, first downstairs, then upstairs. As it passes in front of every door it chants the following request for shelter, symbolizing the appeal of Joseph and Mary on their nine days journey to Bethlehem.

These are the words of this chant: In heaven's name I beg for shelter: My wife and I, Can go no further. From behind the doors to the same solemn chant the answer is sung by the singers, who have been waiting: No inn is this. Begone from hence! Ye may be thieves; We trust ye not.

After repeated denials the procession finally finds shelter in a room previously prepared for it and the statues of Joseph and Mary are placed upon an altar decorated with flowers and silver ornaments. It is here that the most solemn ceremony takes place. In front of the altar is chanted the

"Litany of Loreto." Usually a priest leads this quaint and beautiful chant; if there happens to be no priest the oldest lady of the household usually takes charge. Difficult as this medieval chant is, with its thirty-five invocations, each to be answered with an ora pro nobis, there is scarcely a Mexican woman who does not know it by heart. In Mexico every one is brought up on prayers and elaborate church services. I don't suppose there is anything in the Roman Church litany unknown to the religious Mexican women.

With the last verse of the "Litany of Loreto" the ceremonies of the first night are continued. The words of the last verse are worth quoting for their religious tenderness:

O gracious pilgrim: O purest Mary! I offer thee my soul To be thy dwelling—

The figures of the Holy Family are left on the improvised altar for the night. Then the entire gathering of relatives and friends enters the sitting rooms, where refreshments are served and the most costly and beautiful Christmas presents are given to the guests. It is late when the party breaks up, with merry cries of Hasta mañana en la noche! ("Until to-morrow night.")

A repetition of this posada continues for eight nights afterward, for it is a point of etiquette with us, never to be absent at any one of these series. On Christmas eve every one repairs to the great cathedral, filled with its incense and its music. Here thousands of people visit the shrine of the "Mother and Child." On the fingers of the image of la Virgen are diamonds and other costly gems worth thousands of dollars, which are Christmas presents of the wealthiest Mexican women, and yet, kneeling before this same image will be some starved child wrapped in a thin rebozo, while she mumbles her pitiful prayers. Mexico is a country of contrasts.

It is on Christmas eve that the supreme effort is made to yield to the festive spirit. If we are guests at the marble palace we find a great crowd of people at the gates watching the arrival of carriage after carriage and exclaiming with excitement as the occupants in their beautiful dresses pass on through the courtyard into the house. The heart of Mexico softens for the occasion, and one finds a spirit of greeting everywhere; even the little children hold out their little hands to

every one in courteous, old fashioned welcome.

Half an hour before midnight the "Litany of the God Child" is sung. It is after this that the world famous bullfight song of all Mexico, the "Bambuleo," is heard. Every Mexican knows this "Rock-a-bye" song, which is supposedly for the soothing of the Infant Jesus. In time and tune it is not unlike your song, "Old Gray Goose."

Not until after the religious part in the cathedral does the real dancing and feasting begin. One of the customs is the breaking of pinatas. The pinata is a very brittle earthenware pot or vessel, usually gay in color and of various shapes. These pinatas are sometimes modelled and dressed to represent a clown, a ballet dancer, an angel, almost anything your fancy might conceive. Into the pinata is stuffed the small favors of the Christmas season, such as candies, peanuts, unbreakable toys and little silver articles.

Swinging high in the well lit courtyard of the Mexican home, the game is for the children to reach up and break the pinata. Parents and children all gather under it. Each one is blindfolded and given a long stick, placed under the pinata, turned round three times and told to strike at it. One is given three tries, usually successful. Finally, some one does smash it, and as the fragments fly, a general scramble for them.

This ceremony takes the place of your Christmas tree which is put up a hour for the children. After the children have been sent to bed, we are grown up enjoy a typical Christmas supper. It is usually a feast of fish, salads, sweets and wine. During the meal waxed floors are the scene of a strained orchestra follows. Around the sala, or dancing room on tables are placed costly gold and silver ornaments. These might be regarded as your cotton favors, except that they are bestowed on everybody for the occasion, and one finds a spirit as that in the United States on New England.

After all, Christmas in Mexico is quite as festive and quite as merry as that in the United States or in England.



A gown of satin and chiffon, one of dark blue gabardine and one of blue satin with embroidered jacket.

does see them in every shop window, and while the old baggy blouse in some, a soft, becoming little fullness lingers about many a narrow girldie top or waist band.

If a wide girldie drapery obliterated all trace of blouse, at least it need not be drawn in very tightly, though it does in many models define the under arm curves sharply.

There are plenty of freakish models, plenty of very extreme models too delightful to be stigmatized as freakish, but a general survey of successful French models, now that returns are conservative all in, gives one the impression that skirt bottoms, trains, high collars and hip draperies are the details upon which the extremists play most daringly, and that models conservative all these points are easily obtained without departing from the path of fashion.

Skirt bottoms in the fall were reported "slightly longer." They are always slightly longer as far as the woman of quiet taste is concerned, but even the slightly longer skirt, what, in the old days, we would have called short. The thing is practically necessary while skirts are full or flaring, for greater length spells awkwardness.

But there are exaggeratedly short skirts too—skirties of them—and many have the sanction of most authoritative makers. Moreover, the fashionable skirt has unexpected and, often, fantastic ways of demeaning itself as it approaches its hem. The street skirt may be demurely, even



Of white cloth and black fur.

each end of the paste toward the middle, giving the appearance of the rounded ends of an old time sofa. Prick the remaining flat part of the paste, which, when baked, is to be spread thickly with rich jam or marmalade.

A somewhat similar arrangement calls for a square pastry, each corner turned over toward the centre, thus making the edge higher than the middle. When baked place a spoonful of preserves in the depression.

Peek-a-boo tarts are made from thinly rolled pie crust cut in rounds with a small biscuit cutter. Prick one-half the number with a fork to keep from blistering in baking. In the other half of the rounds cut three holes with a thimble, having the holes form a triangle. Bake in quick oven. Spread jelly on the pricked rounds, prick with the perforated ones, putting in extra jelly through the holes. Sift over powdered sugar.

Pastry rolls are made from circles of crust about four inches in diameter. Prick thoroughly, spread with jelly and roll closely, over and over. Place on inverted baking tin, have the lapped side underneath, to keep the roll in place.

Turnovers are made either from squares or circles of pastry, the filling kept well in the centre so that when one side is turned over the other no juice will be lost. These are now being made in "bouches" (mouthful) size. The old fashioned Banbury tart mixture of grated lemon rind, raisins,